

12th class of the Euless Citizens Police Academy. Additionally, he is a charter member of the Euless Citizens Fire Alumni Association. He has represented the City of Euless in the National League of Cities where he served on the Program Committee in 2005 and the Community Development Policy and Advocacy Committee in 2006. He has also represented the City of Euless in the Texas Municipal League, serving on the Resolutions Committee in 2004 and 2005, and the Legislative Policy Committee on General Government in 2006.

In 2003, Mayor Pro Tem Hogg was inducted into the Hurst-Euless-Bedford ISD Sports Hall of Fame. The recognition was in honor of his positive impact on the community and HEB ISD students.

Mayor Pro Tem Leon Hogg is a retired businessman who has owned several businesses over his lifetime. He and his wife, Jan, have been married for over 55 years. They have 3 children, 8 grandchildren, and 1 great-grandchild.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the 24th Congressional District of Texas, I ask all my distinguished colleagues to join me in thanking the Honorable Leon Hogg for his years of service on the Euless City Council.

#### INCOME INEQUALITY IN THE AFRICAN AMERICAN COMMUNITY

**HON. MARCIA L. FUDGE**

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, May 2, 2014*

Ms. FUDGE. Mr. Speaker, today we find ourselves five decades since the passage of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, as well as the onset of the War on Poverty and still, race and economic empowerment remain entangled in stark and distinctive ways throughout the nation. Not only has income inequality persisted over the years, but perhaps even more daunting is the wide and growing gulf in wealth inequity between Black and White America. Wealth, that is what one owns minus what one owes, anchors families. It provides a layer of stability in times of economic distress, and serves as an intergenerational stepping stone to prosperity. It is wealth that families often rely on to provide a critical means of support for higher education, downpayments for home purchases, capital for starting a business, or direct wealth transfers to heirs via cash inheritances. So while income is vital for meeting daily needs, wealth moves families beyond survival mode and opens up critical doors of opportunity that are necessary to thrive economically over the long haul.

Historically, discriminatory practices have played a significant hand in manifesting wealth differentials within Black and White communities. Everything from housing policies and practices that made it more difficult for communities of color and particularly African Americans to gain access to homeownership as early as their White peers, to tax policy which overwhelmingly favor affluent households, much of the gap in wealth acquisition that we've witnessed over the long haul is not reflective of a natural order of responsible and irresponsible money management, but instead, is the result of centuries of policy actions that have advantaged some, while simultaneously

disadvantaging others. The fallout from these practices remain, providing perpetual advantages and disadvantages relating to wealth acquisition, transfer, and growth.

In recent years, however, the Great Recession took a heavy toll on most. But while few families escaped the sting of wealth loss following this world-wide economic disruption, even fewer were more strikingly impacted than African Americans. In fact, according to the Pew Research Center, over half of the wealth amassed among African Americans was lost in just four years as a direct result of this historic recession. After which, the already tremendous racial wealth gap actually widened. In fact, as it stands today, for every dollar in wealth held by Whites, Blacks hold a shockingly meager 5 cents.

Recent research has examined the reasons behind the widening of the racial wealth gap. After tracing the same households over 25 years, including the most recent period in which we've witnessed the widening of this gap, it was determined that primarily five factors are at play: (1) Years of homeownership; (2) Household Income; (3) Exposure to Unemployment; (4) Higher Education Acquisition; and (5) Inheritances or other sources of financial support from family or friends.

In briefly examining each of these issues we know that historical residential segregation starkly limited opportunity for home equity acquisition among African Americans. We know too, that Whites are more likely than Blacks to receive inheritances or receive large financial gifts from family members that can then be used for home downpayments, and thus, create a situation where Whites are perpetually better positioned to transition into homeownership. And finally, we know that Blacks were disproportionately impacted by subprime mortgage vehicles during the run up to the housing crisis, thus increasing their risk of foreclosure, and limiting their equity acquisition potential.

Further Blacks have historically and continue to suffer wage gaps as compared to Whites across both genders and every level of education. Blacks are also more likely to experience unemployment at some time during their working lives and when unemployed, are more likely to experience longer bouts of joblessness than their White counterparts. As a result, Blacks are more apt to tap into any available wealth reserves they may have at their disposal in order to meet survival needs during disruptions in their income stream.

While home ownership, income and unemployment greatly influenced the wealth differentials, so too did access to higher education. As we all know, post-secondary education provides a pathway to higher income, and ultimately more substantial wealth portfolios. According to this research, just as impactful as higher education is access to inheritance. Together, these five factors alone accounted for fully  $\frac{2}{3}$  of the wealth gap increase we've seen between these two populations in recent years.

In correcting this unfortunate trend, it then becomes clear, that strong policy action is needed in order to address the wide and growing wealth gap that continues to disadvantage the Black community. Moving forward, there must be a concerted emphasis on expanding access to homeownership within the Black community. While the nation and the world was rocked by the mortgage crisis that intricately interconnected with the Great Re-

cession, few were impacted more profoundly than the Black community. Moving forward we know that home ownership is still a key conduit to wealth acquisition for most Americans. As such, special efforts need to be put in place to ensure more Black families have access to this key wealth building tool.

Additionally, policies which expand employment opportunities for jobs that pay good wages are especially important to the Black community. Such a focus can help to alleviate both the persistent wage disadvantage experienced by this community as well as the lingering problem of elevated unemployment rates. Finally, making college affordable and improving elementary and secondary education so that Black children are both prepared for college and can afford to stay there through degree completion is key for providing a foundation for success that could later result in greater access to wealth building vehicles.

Beyond these measures, protecting and strengthening Social Security remains a key need for the Black community as this program is especially important to a population that is disadvantaged when it comes to access to employer provided retirement plans and is less likely than Whites to hold other assets from which they can draw upon to meet their needs in their retirement years.

In sum, Mr. Speaker, the persistent economic wealth disadvantage that continues to plague the Black community did not come about as mere accident of circumstance or broad scale pathologies as it relates to financial mismanagement. Instead, these differences came about from centuries of policy action that served in the interest of some and to the disadvantage of others. Despite this nation's bold attempt to correct this injustice decades before, the lingering effects of these policies remain. Moving forward, it is our responsibility to fulfill the promise of the historic Acts, including the 1964 Civil Rights Act, put in place fifty years prior by taking bold and substantive action today to finally make real the promise of an America that truly provides equal opportunity for all.

#### HONORING JUDY CREMER'S 50 YEARS OF PUBLIC SERVICE

**HON. ADAM KINZINGER**

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, May 2, 2014*

Mr. KINZINGER of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Mrs. Judy Cremer, Livingston County Circuit Clerk, and to recognize her many years of devoted service to the citizens of Livingston County and the State of Illinois.

Mrs. Cremer has worked in Livingston County government for 50 years. Judy started her service in the State Attorney's office in 1964 and later moved over to the Circuit Clerk's office where she has been a dutiful employee since 1980. She has been a constant presence in Livingston County and helped make countless improvements in the Circuit Clerk's office throughout her years of service.

I would like to thank Judy for all she has done for the residents of Livingston County. She has been a leader and an integral part of Livingston County government these past 50

years. I know that the people of Livingston County are thankful for her service and efforts to improve the lives of those in the area.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the 16th District of Illinois, I wish to express our deepest thanks to Judy Cremer for her commendable service and dedication to the people of Livingston County and the State of Illinois for the past 50 years.

**EFFECTIVE ACCOUNTABILITY:  
TIER RANKINGS AND THE TIP  
REPORT**

**HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH**

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, May 2, 2014*

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, earlier this week, I held a hearing on the power of holding countries accountable in the annual Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Report, including its tier rankings, for government successes or failures in the fight against human trafficking.

Experts have observed that there are more slaves in the world today than at any previous point of human history. With the Trafficking in Persons Report and tier rankings, the United States is also ensuring more accountability and progress than ever before in the fight to rid the world of slavery.

Many of those who attended the hearing have been in this fight for more than a decade from the year 2000 when a law I authored—the Trafficking Victims' Protection Act (TPVA)—created a comprehensive policy that not only established the Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons at the Department of State, but also the annual Trafficking in Persons Report.

The success of the TIP Report and rankings is beyond anything we could have hoped for at the time. From presidential suites to the halls of parliaments to law enforcement assets and police stations in remote corners of the world, this report focuses anti-trafficking work in 187 countries on the pivotal goals of prevention, prosecution, and protection.

Much of the praise for the success of the TIP Report is due to the incredibly effective Ambassadors-at-Large who have led the Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons (J/TIP) and their highly dedicated staff. Ambassador Mark Lagon is one of them and he testified at our hearing this week.

Each year, the trafficking office evaluates whether the government of a country is fully complying with the minimum standards for the elimination of human trafficking, or, if not, whether the government is making significant efforts to do so.

The record is laid bare for the world to see and summarized in a tier ranking narrative. Tier 1 countries fully meet the minimum standards. Tier 2 countries do not meet the minimum standards but are making significant effort to do so. Tier 3 countries do not meet the standards and are not making significant effort to do so. Along with the embarrassment of being listed on Tier 3, such countries are open to sanction by the U.S. government.

Over the last 14 years, more than 120 countries have enacted anti-trafficking laws and many countries have taken other steps required to significantly raise their tier rankings.

Some countries openly credit the TIP report as a key factor in their increased and effective anti-trafficking response.

We created the Tier 2 Watch List in the 2003 TVPA reauthorization. This list was intended to encourage good-faith anti-trafficking progress in a country that may have taken positive anti-trafficking steps late in the evaluation year.

Unfortunately, some countries made a habit of last minute efforts and failed to follow through year after year—effectively gaming the system. To protect the integrity of the tier system and ensure it worked properly to inspire real progress in the fight against human trafficking, Congress in 2008 created an “automatic downgrade” for any country that had been on the Tier 2 Watch List for two years but had not taken significant enough anti-trafficking measures to move up a tier.

The President can waive this automatic downgrade for two additional years if he certifies “credible evidence” that the country has a written and sufficiently resourced plan, which if implemented, would constitute significant effort to meet the minimum standards.

Last year was the first test of the new system—and it worked. China, Russia, and Uzbekistan ran out of waivers and moved to Tier 3, which accurately reflected their records. In the hearing, we evaluated whether these countries have made any significant progress over the last year.

I am particularly concerned that China's trafficking crisis continues unabated. The recent U.N. Commission of Inquiry Report on North Korea provides horrifying evidence of the trafficking of North Korean women to China for sex, brides, or labor. An estimated 90 percent of North Korean women seeking asylum in China are trafficked for these reasons. Thousands of women a year leave desperate situations in North Korea only to end up in a brothel or forced marriage—a tragic and astonishing fact.

China's response has not been to provide protection for victims or to prosecute traffickers; it is to hunt down and repatriate North Koreans, sending them back—to hard labor, long imprisonments, and possible execution.

North Korean women are not the only victims. By 2020, more than 40 million Chinese men will be unable to find wives in China because of China's short-sighted and abusive one-child policy, which, coupled with modern abortion technology, has triggered the mass abortion of tens of millions of baby girls. A human rights abuse in and of itself, sex-selective abortions have also created a huge trafficking magnet, pulling victims into forced marriages and brothels from countries in proximity to China and beyond.

China's extremely modest and overly hyped suggestion that it might relax the draconian one-child policy for some couples is unlikely to mitigate the disaster and may be further counteracted by the spread of abortion sex selection technology to more of rural China. Whether the birth limitation is one-child or two-child in special cases, birth limitation policies constitute abuse, cruelty, and exploitation without precedent or parallel for baby girls and society.

The Government of China is failing not only to address its own trafficking problems but is creating an incentive for human trafficking problems in the whole region. Although she could not join us in person at the hearing, re-

nowned author Mara Hvistandahl, author of *Unnatural Selection, Choosing Boys over Girls and the Consequences of a World Full of Men*, submitted testimony for the record specifically on the effect of the sex ratio imbalance as a cause of human trafficking and the proliferation of “marriage agencies” in China, which traffic women from poorer countries into China and sell them into marriage.

During the hearing, we also looked at a second set of countries that, this year, must be automatically downgraded unless they have made significant efforts to fight human trafficking. These countries include Thailand, Malaysia, Afghanistan, Chad, Barbados, and Maldives. Burma may receive a Presidential waiver in order to avoid downgrade to Tier 3 but the facts on the ground don't justify that course of action.

Cutting across Burma, Thailand, and Malaysia is the tragic plight of the Rohingya minority. Rohingya are leaving Burma by the thousands to escape religious persecution. However, according to a report put out by Reuters, Thai authorities are selling Rohingya to human traffickers, where they are held in “tropical gulags” until relatives pay ransom. Those who cannot pay the ransom are sold into sex slavery or hard labor and many die from abuse or disease. Thai authorities have done little to stop this practice, their efforts at prevention and prosecution are said to be “losing steam.”

Rohingya are often trafficked to Malaysia where they are exploited for labor. The sad fact is that many Rohingya, a persecuted Sunni Muslim minority in Burma, hope to find refuge in Malaysia, a majority Muslim country.

Burma is the source of Rohingya trafficking in the region. Policies of discrimination, child limitation, forced birth control, and violence push the Rohingya minority to leave Burma and leave them vulnerable refugees. The Burmese government is culpable in Rohingya trafficking and the regional problems their policies create.

The Burmese Government also has done little to stop trafficking of Rohingya within Burma. Reports indicate that authorities profit from the sale of Rohingya to traffickers, Rohingya women are held at military bases as sex slaves, and Rohingya men are used for forced labor. Though these practices have gone on for many years, they are under-reported in the State Department's TIP Report.

Displaced by war with the Burmese military, women and children from the Kachin tribe in Burma are also subject to trafficking. Roi Ja, an 18-year-old woman living in IDP camp in northern Burma, was lured to China with a promise of a restaurant job. Once in China she was bused to a rural village and locked in a room. According to her testimony, she cried for three days and begged those around to let her go. She was told to just “give up” and was sold as a bride for \$5,312.

We hear constantly about Burma's success democratic reforms, but peel away the layers of good news, and many of the same human rights problems and human atrocities remain. I understand that the administration has started a “Human Trafficking Dialogue” with Burma. Diplomatic engagement is important, but not enough to warrant an upgrade in Burma's status. For that we have to see concrete results, not Rohingya trafficked for sex and labor.

The importance of accurate Tier rankings and TIP Report country profiles cannot be